



How to / Trackmania / Trackmaking / Blockmix / Hex-Edit

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Part 4 : General hints

There are some general things, you should know about....

Finding single tiles in ChallengeEdit

Usually, the last tile inserted in the TM editor before saving, will be the last block you will find in the ChallengeEdit block listing...

Nevertheless, it's much better to actually **KNOW a tile's XYZ position** from inserting/finding it in the TM editor.. it may take some practice, but only then you'll always be able to find every single tile in the ChallengeEdit block listing, especially when dealing with tracks, which already contain LOTS of tiles.

Always keep Backups

ChallengeEdit is a pretty good tool, but nevertheless you should always keep multiple backups of any track you make. Sometimes it might be necessary to return to an earlier step version, because some blockmixing you did earlier (which can't be undone) now makes it impossible for you to continue..

The "healing" process itself

Blockmixing means, that you move a block out of its "natural" state, the way it was placed and connected to its surrounding by the TM editor. Not only connections to other tiles are stored in the track file (and then moved by you with ChallengeEdit), but also what surface a tile was placed on.

When trying to lure TM into "fixing" this for you by pressing *ERASE+UNDO*, TM might encounter a situation which it cannot handle properly. TM will shutdown. If that happens and you can't find any way to eliminate this flaw in a proper way, you might consider using an earlier backup of your track and continue building there.



Besides this, it is sometimes desirable not to "heal" a mixed part. The video shows this:

The left lane is normally placed. At the end of the lane, you have a typical road edge piece.

The right lane was vertically mixed down by 1 cell, not healed (therefor hasn't got the road edge piece), but afterwards connected to the lane piece above it...

Right before jumping down, **the car on the normal lane** hits the road edge piece and starts to tip over. If the speed had been higher, the car would've surely had a big crash...

The car on the mixed/non-healed lane can smoothly jump down with no impact on the driving... So in this case, a non-healed tile could be more productive for the track's driving...

What tiles are not to be mixed ?



When you e.g. mix a turbo and a checkpoint together, Trackmania tries to show you both blocks at the same time. Unfortunately, both blocks have **different texture surface graphics**, so TM will show you some flickering mix between both textures, depending on your camera position.

Mixes like these are ugly.

What tiles are NEVER to be mixed ?

Do not combine 2 normal road checkpoints. And never combine a start, finish and a checkpoint together !

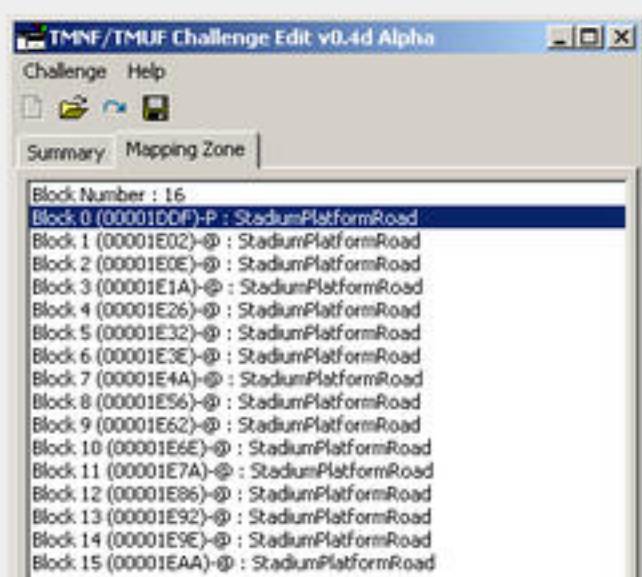
This can cause people to get banned from the server they play the track on, since most servers are protected against cheating and driving through multiple CPs / Starts / Finishes at the same time is considered "cheating" for the anti-cheat recognition mechanisms.

It's (very :) funny for all spectators, but not funny for the players who get banned from a server, because a track author has done some bad blockmixing.

Part 5 : Advanced ChallengeEdit functions



Imagine you built a platform with the "StadiumPlatformRoad" tiles, but you don't like them, because they're somehow too unelegant or maybe you want to build something right below it and you can't because the platform part is too thick...

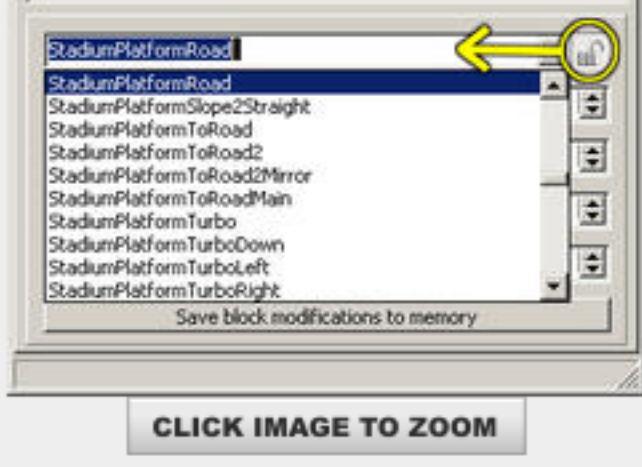


Load the track in ChallengeEdit...

Before the "StadiumPlatformRoad" you can see a "-P" ..this means it's a "primary" block, the "leading" block of this group...

The blocks below this have an "-@" after the hex adress, that means that they're depending on the "P" primary block.

Select the Primary block and then click on the "Unlock" button at the bottom (yellow circle)...After a confirmation popup, you can now use the dropdown list to **CHANGE** the primary block type...



Select "StadiumInflatableSupport" from the dropdown list and press the "Save block modifications..." button...

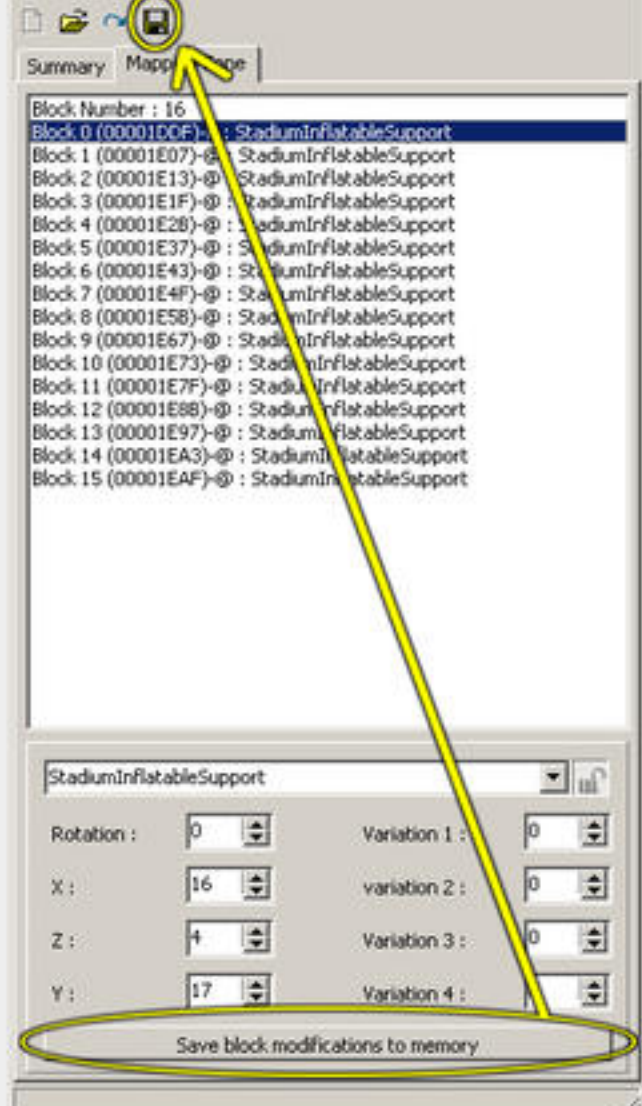
The primary block and all @ blocks have now changed to another type... now save the track and reopen the track in TM.

Notes:

*** You can also **change the type of single @ blocks** (limitation: only as long as there is already 1 existing P-primary block of your desired choice in the tile listing !).

*** Usually, the name of a block will already tell you, what kind of tile it is, but in order to get a complete overview, it takes lots of practice and experience.

*** In some environments, there are "hidden" blocks, not shown in the internal TM editor, but available in this listing. Inserting them into a track is pretty flashy :)



Et voilà !

Now you have some super thin platform, which is usually only available on the top of the red inflatables... and because the usual red bulgs at the side are missing, you can now use several road transition pieces on the platform edges...

Future versions of ChallengeEdit will include functions like "multi block movement" and more...

Part 6 : Special objects + tasks

Here are the descriptions of special tasks or objects, which shall give you some understanding of blockmixing workflow...

Inflatables

Inflatables have the most codes/blocks, so they are the hardest to modify, but it's only a matter of how long you search for a single block :-)

The codes for a platform represent every single part in the platform. The first code will be the first height of the platform, the one that's on the ground. The further you go in the codes, the higher you get in the platform.

The codes for each platform are separated. So when you build one inflatable, it will be separated in the hex editor from every other inflatable.

Warning : When you modified a platform and the platform has not its original shape anymore, an attempt to press the "UNDO" button in the TM editor will probably crash TM.

Grass floating in the air

Method 1) Put a block on the ground and move it up. As the block is attached to the grass, the grass will move up too. The best is to use poles (but you can also use other parts, like turns, as long as they contain a small strip of grass at the side), they are very small so give more space to race on. Also be careful, when you delete floating grass, it won't come back when you press undo. Also dirt can be moved up, but you don't need to put anything on it.

Method 2) Build a platform in the air and use ChallengeEdit to change it to "StadiumGrass"; disadvantage: you will have holes in the ground where the grass would usually be :-)

Invisible roads

This is the most difficult mix. It requires a lot of patience, so here's how it goes :

- 1) First you create a swimming pool on the ground, at the horizontal coordinates, where you want to have an invisible ground.
- 2) Now move up the "water" blocks with ChallengeEdit. (only the water, not the swimming pool edges)
- 3) Under the water there is a floor. Although, when you move it up you won't see it. Which creates the illusion of an invisible road.
- 4) Now here comes the nasty part. You can not mix anything through the invisible road, you can not build anything on the invisible road and you can not build anything under the invisible road. It's also a bit higher than the regular road, so you will need a platform jump (the black one) which has the exact same height to get on it.
- 5) When you move water up it will leave a big hole in the ground which looks very ugly. To cover this up you can move something on it. For example: A platform. Make sure you calculate its coordinates very exactly: if you miss, you have to do the whole platform all over again. Also, you can only move up the water once ! So when you make a mistake and need to add/remove invisible road you first have to move the water back down, then you can expand your swimming pool.

Now you should have a basic idea of how blockmixing in Trackmania actually works... In order to create great mixes, you will need LOTS of experience ... if you have questions, visit the forum thread..



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